

In This Issue:

April 25, 2007

- This Week's Motivational Quote
- Weekly Contest
- Chef's Corner with Executive Chef Michael Thieme
- Upcoming Hotel Events
- Hotel News - VRI Going To The Dogs
- Did You Know? Oregon's Pretty Big

### This Week's Motivational Quote

"Winning is not a sometime thing; it's an all time thing. You don't win once in a while, you don't do things right once in a while, you do them right all the time. Winning is habit. Unfortunately, so is losing."

-Vince Lombardi, Hall of Fame NFL Coach

[If you're motivated to book a hotel room, click here!](#)



### Weekly Contest

Last Week's Question:

Easter Sunday Brunch is our second largest Brunch of the year. (Mother's Day is our largest.) How many people did we serve Easter Sunday Brunch to on April 8th?

Last Week's Answer:

890

Congratulations to Michael Newman of Thanks for Holding for winning last week's contest. Michael's guess of 914 was closest to the actual number. Michael wins a Bed & Breakfast Package at Valley River Inn!

Every week we give our subscribers a chance to win GREAT prizes from Valley River Inn. To enter, simply click on the link below and complete the form. The submission closest to the actual answer wins! If there is a tie, we will randomly draw a winner.

Deadline to Enter:

Sunday, April 29th @ 10AM

GOOD LUCK!

THIS WEEK'S PRIZE:

Mother's Day Brunch for 2 at VRI

THIS WEEK'S QUESTION:

As you learned in the "Did You Know" section of this week's newsletter, Oregon's 3 largest cities in terms of population are Portland, Salem and Eugene. What two cities round out the top 5?

**ENTER  
NOW TO  
WIN!**

[Click Here To Enter](#)

## Chef's Corner with Executive Chef Michael Thieme

Hello,

My name is Michael Thieme and I am the Executive Chef at Valley River Inn where I oversee the culinary teams in both SweetWaters on the River and the Banquet/Catering Department. I have been with Valley River Inn for more than 15 years and have been cooking professionally for over 20 years. Along the way, I've learned a few "tricks of the trade" and I thought that this week I'd share a few with you.



I'll be back again next week with one of my favorite recipes. If you can't wait that long, come in to SweetWaters on the River for lunch or dinner. We have a new Spring menu that I know you're going to love.

Enjoy!

Sincerely,

Chef Michael Thieme

### Eggs boiled not broken

Make a pinprick in the rounded end of the shell to help to prevent cracking when boiling.

The bottom, rounded end of an egg contains a small air bubble. As the egg heats up, the air inside the bubble expands. As the hot air pushes outwards, it puts pressure onto the shell, making it crack. By making a pin-pick in the end of the egg, the expanding air can escape. This releases the pressure and stops the shell from cracking.

### Cutting onions without crying

There are lots of ways to avoid your eyes watering when chopping onions. For example, wearing glasses, chewing parsley or chilling your onions before slicing them.

Onion cells contain highly volatile sulphur compounds that are released into the air when you slice into them. Your eyes produce tears because your body wants to wash or dilute the chemicals before they affect your eyes. Tears are a natural way for the body to wash the offensive chemicals away.

All these methods are a way of reducing this effect:

- goggles create a physical barrier between the compounds and your eyes
- refrigerating an onion before chopping minimises the release of its toxic gas
- chewing parsley oxidizes the sulphur compounds, rendering them harmless

Another method involves placing a lighted candle near the chopping block. Like parsley, this also oxidizes the sulphur compounds, changing their composition so that they no

longer cause crying

Or you can try sticking your tongue out while cutting your onions - the moisture on your tongue soaks up the airborne chemicals before they reach your eyes.  
(You may not want to do this if you have company over, lest they make fun of you)

#### Lumpless Sauces

Use boiling liquid and add slowly to the roux. Cook between each addition and stir in well. Whisk whenever possible and if in real trouble, pass through a sieve.

Roux is a type of batter, made from butter and flour, used to thicken sauces. When liquid is added to flour, the starch granules inside the flour begin to swell when they reach 147°F. Heating the mixture further makes them rupture. The flour starch is released into the liquid and starts to thicken it. This is known as 'gelatinisation'.

So when flour is mixed with hot liquid, the exterior portion of the starch granules become gelatinised and sticky. They then bind around the dry starch granules, forming pockets of dry flour trapped inside a sticky ball - or 'lumps'.

Adding liquid to the roux gradually while stirring, ensures that the starch granules heat up evenly, so they swell in unison. This results in a smooth, lumpless sauce.

#### Making the perfect pasta

Pasta is a starchy food made from egg and wheat. Uncooked pasta contains rigid starch granules. When plunged into boiling water, these granules begin to absorb water and swell. Some of the starch granules leak out of the pasta into the water. These leaked granules also start to swell, thickening the water. If there isn't enough water in the pan, it becomes thick and gloopy and the pasta starts sticking together.

[Click here to see some of my recipes](#)

## Upcoming Hotel Events

There's always something going on at Valley River Inn and every week, we're sending you the fun stuff happening for the next 3 months, so you'll have time to plan.

Here are some upcoming highlights:

Call 341-3464 for more information

#### SUNDAY, APRIL 29

Eugene Marathon

Come by for Sunday Brunch and watch the runners pass by. We'll have a band playing out on the bike path!

#### WEDNESDAY, MAY 2

BINGO! A Relay for Life Fundraiser

6:00PM - 8:30PM at Valley River Inn

\$15 for 4 cards, free snacks and a raffle ticket

Win great prizes!

Call 681-5074 for more information.



SUNDAY, MAY 13  
Mother's Day Brunch

Seating from 9AM - 2PM

Adults - \$36.00  
Children 5-12 - \$18.00  
Under 5 - FREE

FRIDAY, JUNE 8  
Chamber of Commerce Auction Dinner at VRI  
A benefit dinner for the US Olympic Track Trials in 2008

SATURDAY, JUNE 9  
Chamber of Commerce Golf Tournament  
A benefit for the US Olympic Track Trials in 2008

FRIDAY/SATURDAY, JULY 27-28  
Relay for Life benefiting the American Cancer Society  
To donate, call Jeri McPherson at 681-5074.

[For our complete Calendar of Events, Click Here!](#)

## Hotel News - VRI Going To The Dogs

### Pampered Pooch Package

Valley River Inn is proud to announce the creation of a brand new Dog Package aimed at your best four-legged friend. If you didn't already know, Valley River Inn is one of the few "Pet-Friendly" hotels in Eugene and we've now taken that love of animals to the next level. Our Pampered Pooch Package includes:

- Your dog's name will be on a chalkboard in our lobby welcoming him or her to the hotel
- Your dog will receive a personalized welcome note upon arrival
- Deluxe Guestroom for Pooch (owners stay free)
- Welcome Basket Placed in room with lots of doggie goodies.
- Customized VRI Dog Tag
- VRI Logo Bandana
- \$25 Gift Certificate to Lexi Dog, Eugene's coolest dog boutique
- Doggy Bed Turndown service with special treat
- Special Yappetizer Room Service Menu offering unique treats, toys and more!
- Doggie Map listing pet-friendly attractions, off-leash dog parks, nearby pet stores and a list of local retailers who allow pet access.

Deluxe - \$179.00 + tax  
Riverview - \$199.00 + tax



(These rates are subject to change and are not guaranteed.)

We also have a really great Pet Map of the Eugene area, drawn by local cartoonist James Cloutier, and a fun "Yappetizer Room Service Menu" just for our favorite four-legged friends. Click the link below to see them both.

So what are you waiting for? Tell you friends and family that they can bring Fido along with them on their next visit!

[Click Here to Book a Pet Package](#)

## Did You Know? Oregon's Pretty Big

A Fun Tidbit Delivered Right To Your Email Inbox Every Week.

Did you know...

Oregon is the 10th largest state in terms of area at over 97,132 square miles. In terms of population, Oregon ranks 27th in the nation based on the 2005 U.S. census. Three cities in Oregon rank in the Top 200 in population in the U.S.

30. Portland - 533,427  
152. Salem - 148,751  
156. Eugene - 144,515

Granite, OR comes in as Oregon's smallest incorporated city with a population of 21. (Unless you count the city of Greenhorn, which officially has a population of zero)

[Click Here To Visit Valley River Inn](#)



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Coming in Next Week's Issue

- \* Motivational Quote of the Week
- \* Weekly Contest
- \* Feature Article
- \* Calendar of Events
- \* Hotel News
- \* Did You Know?

[Want to See An Earlier Newsletter? Click Here For our Newsletter Archive](#)

Close Window